

APRIL 1984
VOLUME 48
NUMBER 4
ISSN 0026-3621

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MIKE SHAYNE MYSTERY MAGAZINE, Vol. 48, No. 4, April 1984. Published monthly by Renown Publications, Inc., 18309 Sherman Way, Suite C, Reseda, CA 91335. Subscription: One Year (12 issues) \$18.00; Two Years (24 issues) \$32.00; Canada, One Year \$21.00; Two years \$38.00; Foreign, One Year \$24.00; Two years \$40.00 (U.S. Funds Only). Second Class postage paid at Reseda, CA and at additional mailing offices. Events and characters in this magazine are wholly fictitious. Copyright © 1984 by Renown Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Protection secured under the International and Pan-American Conventions. Printed in the United States of America. Postmaster — return P.O. Box 178, Reseda, CA 91335.

MIKE SHAYNE

MYSTERY MAGAZINE

DAY OF REVENGE

by Brett Halliday

The Miami natives were restless, ready to revolt into a full-scale riot—and Mike Shayne found himself right in the middle of the fight! 4

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One of them—the mother or the brother—was guilty of murder. But which one? And why would either of them want to see the victim dead?

The Investigator

by JACK RITCHIE

I APPROACHED THE SCENE OF THE CRIME AGAIN, WALKING around the body, searching the tall grass for some clue, some hint as to which one of them might have killed him. I knelt beside the victim.

He lay on his side, his head badly crushed by the heavy blows that had killed him. In life he had been a tall, fine-looking man with black hair and blue eyes. Now he would return to the dust.

I looked up at the other two. The woman and the son. One of them had committed the murder and they were now waiting for me to decide which one of them it was.

The mother?

I did not want to think that, but yes, she could have killed him. She was small, almost fragile, and yet she could have swung the club. She could have approached him silently when he was unaware of her presence and she could have struck again and again until he was dead.

But if she had killed him, why? What reason could she have had?

Had he done or said something that had enraged her? Or had there been some wrong over which she had brooded for years until finally she could tolerate it no longer?

I looked at the son. He was muscular, powerful. And one could almost tell from his appearance, his sullen bearing, that he had been a spoiled moody child. He scowled, even now.

I stood up and wiped my forehead. It was quite warm out here in this field.

Yes, one of them was guilty of murder. But now another possibility came to my mind. Could it be that *both* of them were responsible for the death? The one distracting the victim while the other struck?

But again why? Why would both of them want to see him dead?

This was clearly a crime of fury, of passion. What exactly had happened here? I tried to imagine, to reconstruct, the events preceding the murder.

Why had the victim come to this particular spot? I looked toward the hills. It was obvious that he had come from that direction. Down the hills and along the faint path between the trees. He had crossed the plowed field. His footprints on the bare soil indicated that. He had come to this strip of tall grass. And then what? Had one of the two been waiting for him? Or both? Had the murderer been waiting for him here and spoken to him, drawing his attention, while the other approached from the rear and raised the club?

I studied the woman. There was something in her eyes that made you realize that she could do almost anything. Even talk someone else into doing what both of them knew was mortally wrong.

She said she had discovered the body. It had been noon, with the sun almost directly overhead. She had come upon the body and she had touched nothing. Everything was just as she had found it.

Now she spoke. "We can't leave him lying out here."

"No," I said. "I'll be just a little while longer."

Feet other than the victim's had trod on this grass, but it had sprung back up again leaving no trace of the murderer's presence.

The murderer had used this long strip of grass beside the plowed field to get to this point. If he had done so with the purpose of concealing his footprints, it meant that he had come here with the cold-blooded intent to kill. He had planned the crime.

Or was it possible that this was simply the natural way to get here? I myself had used the strip to avoid walking over the rain-dampened field. Then had there been no premeditation? Had the killing resulted from a dispute that had flared out of hand?

My eyes returned to the body. It was difficult to tell just exactly how

long he had been dead. She said she had last seen him alive and well early this morning.

I had already questioned both of them, and each had denied any knowledge of the crime. When I had spoken to her she had regarded me quietly and there had been something in eyes that I had not quite been able to fathom. As though there was something she, in turn, wanted to ask me, but dared not.

I now took the blanket and gently wrapped it around the body. I lifted it to my shoulder. She followed me to the house.

When I put down the body inside, I looked at her again. There was grief in her face and something else. And now I saw what it was that she had wanted to ask me. She wanted to know if it was *I* who had killed him.

I was shocked and angry that she should think such a thing and in my anger I went out looking for the boy.

I found him in a glen in the forest, his face frightened and turned up to the sky.

I heard the voice speak to him.

"Where is Abel thy brother?"

He answered, "I know not. Am I my brother's keeper?"

And my oldest son, Cain, was banished from our land. ●

MYSTERY MINIQUIZ

A member of the Honolulu police department, he's a Chinese-Hawaiian who delights in quoting aphorisms. Who is this fictional detective?

He's Charlie Chan, created by author Earl Derr Biggers.

What was the real name of Arthur Conan Doyle?

The real name of Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of Sherlock Holmes, was Arthur Conan Doyle.

In a series of mystery films made during the forties, actor Warner Baxter portrayed a medical detective named Dr. Robert Ordway. What was the overall name of the series?

The name of the series was The Crime Doctor.